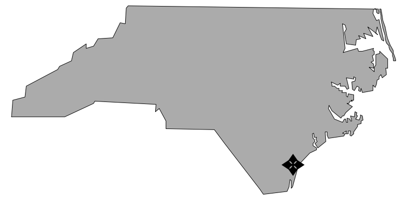
New Hanover County Airport

NPL

Size: 4 acres
Mission: Served as World War II bomber command and Vietnam-era aerospace defense command
HRS Score: 39.39; placed on NPL in March 1989
IAG Status: None
Contaminants: VOCs and SVOCs
Media Affected: Groundwater
Funding to Date: $1.7 million
Estimated Cost to Completion (Completion Year): $0.9 million (FY2009)
Final Remedy in Place or Response Complete Date for All Sites: FY2009



Wilmington, North Carolina

Restoration Background

In FY87, a Preliminary Assessment and a Site Inspection identified groundwater contamination caused by fire training activities conducted at New Hanover County Airport from FY68 through FY79. Fire training activities involved burning jet fuel, gasoline, fuel oil, and kerosene. The site included a burn pit, a mockup of an aircraft, and a 10,000-gallon aboveground storage tank that supplied fuel to the burn areas. The site also contained several other fire training stations, including a fire smokehouse, a railroad tanker car, and several automobiles. As a result of fire training activities, groundwater was contaminated with benzene.

EPA has identified DoD New Hanover County, Cape Fear Community College, and the City of Wilmington as potentially responsible parties (PRPs) for the site.

A Removal Action completed in FY91 involved removal of waste materials, contaminated water, contaminated surface and subsurface soil, and structures associated with the fire training activities. Soil samples were collected to confirm that no contaminated soil remained on site. As a result of the confirmatory sampling, the recommendation was that no further action be taken at the site.

In FY92, EPA completed the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study for groundwater contamination, and the Record of Decision (ROD) for cleanup was signed. In FY94, PRPs began Remedial Design (RD) work at the airport to collect additional data on groundwater quality. In FY95, two monitoring wells were installed to confirm that contamination had not migrated to the lower groundwater aquifer. A 60 percent RD document was sent to EPA with a recommendation that air-sparging be used as a more cost-effective treatment technology.

In FY96, the PRPs continued their efforts to obtain EPA approval of the pilot test of air-sparging technology. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continued to obtain funding for DoD's share of design costs.

In FY97, the PRPs used a low-volume / low-flow sampling technique to reevaluate metal contamination in the groundwater. The reevaluation showed that metals were no longer a contaminant of concern. This finding was instrumental in obtaining approval from EPA and the State of North Carolina for implementation of the air-sparging pilot study.

FY98 Restoration Progress

The PRPs conducted geoprobe studies to determine the direction of groundwater flow. The air-sparging pilot test was completed, and the draft report is in progress. An evaluation of the efficacy of the technology was also completed.

Plan of Action

- Install additional wells and piezometers to aid in RD in FY99
- Revise the RD in FY99
- Begin full-scale utilization of the air-sparging technology in FY99
- Amend and implement ROD in FY99 and complete ROD in FY04
- USACE and Department of Justice will evaluate possible settlement of DoD liability in FY99

FY99 Funding by Phase and Relative Risk